

IN THE CLAIMS:

- 1 1. (previously amended) A curette including:
 - 2 a detachable tip with a proximal mating end that includes a threaded section and
 - 3 an outwardly extending elongated section with one or more flattened sides;
 - 4 a shaft with a proximal end and a distal mating end, the distal end including a
 - 5 threaded indent for receiving the proximal mating end of the tip, the indent being sized to
 - 6 contain epoxy that hardens around the elongated section of the proximal mating end of
 - 7 the tip when the proximal end of the tip and the distal end of the shaft mate; and
 - 8 a handle with a distal end and a proximal end, the distal end being shaped to mate
 - 9 with the proximal end of the shaft.
- 1 2. (Original) The curette of claim 1 wherein the threads of the threaded sections of the
- 2 tip and the shaft interlock when the proximal end of the tip and the distal end of the shaft
- 3 mate.
- 1 3. (Original) The curette of claim 1 wherein
 - 2 the distal end of the handle includes a threaded section and an outwardly extend-
 - 3 ing elongated section with one or more flattened sides, and
 - 4 the proximal end of the shaft includes a threaded indent that is shaped to receive
 - 5 the distal end of the handle, the indent being sized to contain epoxy that hardens around
 - 6 the elongated section of the distal end of the handle when the proximal end of the shaft
 - 7 and the distal end of the handle mate.
- 1 4. (Original) The curette of claim 2 wherein the tip has a distal end that is shaped for
- 2 scraping.
- 1 5. (Original) The curette of claim 4 wherein the tip is coated with a durable coating
- 2 from a proximal end to the threaded section.

- 1 6. (Original) The curette of claim 5 wherein the durable coating is titanium nitrate.
- 1 7. (Original) The curette of claim 4 wherein the distal end of the tip is shaped as one of
2 a scoop or a ring.
- 1 8. (currently amended) A method for assembling a curette, the method including the
2 steps of:
 - 3 partially filling ~~with epoxy~~ a threaded indent in a distal end of a shaft with epoxy,
 - 4 the indent being shaped to receive a mating end of a tip;
 - 5 inserting the mating end of the tip in the partially-filled indent and screwing the
 - 6 shaft and tip together to interlock threads on the mating end of the tip with the threads in
 - 7 the indent, with the epoxy hardening around an elongated outwardly extending section of
 - 8 the mating end of the tip; and
 - 9 attaching a handle to a proximal end of the shaft.
- 1 9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the step of attaching the handle includes
2 inserting the distal end of the handle into a shaped indent in the proximal end of the shaft.
- 1 10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the step of attaching the handle further
2 includes partially filling the shaped indent in the proximal end of the shaft with epoxy,
- 3 the epoxy surrounding an elongated outwardly extending portion of the distal end of the
- 4 handle when the handle is attached to the shaft.
- 1 11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the step of attaching further includes
2 screwing together threads on the distal end of the handle and threads in the indent in the
- 3 proximal end of the shaft until the threads interlock.

1 12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 78 further including a step of removing a
2 worn or dulled tip by heating the proximal end of the tip and the distal end of the shaft
3 until the epoxy softens and unscrewing the tip and shaft.

1 13. (Currently Amended) A curette with a replaceable tip including:
2 a tip with a proximal end that includes a threaded section and an outwardly ex-
3 tending elongated section with one or more flattened sides;
4 a shaft with a proximal end and a distal mating end, the distal end including a
5 threaded indent for receiving the proximal end of the tip, the indent being sized to contain
6 epoxy;
7 epoxy that hardens around the elongated section of the proximal end of the tip
8 when the proximal end of the tip and the distal end of the shaft screw together to mate,
9 the epoxy being softened to allow the threads of the tip and shaft to be unscrewed for tip
10 replacement; and
11 a handle with a distal end and a proximal end, the distal end being shaped to mate
12 with the proximal end of the shaft.

1 14. (Original) The curette of claim 13 wherein the threads of the threaded sections of the
2 tip and the shaft interlock when the proximal end of the tip and the distal end of the shaft
3 screw together to mate.

1 15. (Original) The curette of claim 13 wherein
2 the distal end of the handle includes a threaded section and an outwardly extend-
3 ing elongated section with one or more flattened sides, and
4 the proximal end of the shaft includes a threaded indent that is shaped to receive
5 the distal end of the handle, the indent being sized to contain epoxy that hardens around
6 the elongated section of the distal end of the handle when the proximal end of the shaft
7 and the distal end of the handle mate.

- 1 16. (Original) The curette of claim 14 wherein the tip has a distal end that is shaped for
- 2 scraping.
- 1 17. (Original) The curette of claim 16 wherein the tip is coated with a durable coating
- 2 from a proximal end to the threaded section.
- 1 18. (previously amended) The curette of claim 17 wherein the coating is titanium nitrate.
- 1 19. (Original) The curette of claim 16 wherein the distal end of the tip is shaped as one
- 2 of a scoop or a ring.
- 1 20. (previously added) A method for replacing a tip of a curette, the method including
- 2 the steps of:
 - 3 removing an attached tip by heating epoxy included in a threaded indent in a
 - 4 distal end of a shaft, the indent being sized to receive a threaded mating end of the tip,
 - 5 and unscrewing the tip from the indent;
 - 6 partially filling the threaded indent in the distal end of the shaft with epoxy;
 - 7 inserting the threaded mating end of a replacement tip in the partially-filled indent
 - 8 and screwing the shaft and tip together to interlock threads on the mating end of the
 - 9 replacement tip with the threads in the indent;
 - 10 allowing the epoxy to harden around the mating end of the replacement tip, with
 - 11 one or more flattened sides of the replacement tip preventing relative rotation of the
 - 12 replacement tip; and
 - 13 attaching a handle to a proximal end of the shaft.